

THE DAILY PORTION

SIVAN RAHAV-MEIR

Beyond the Headlines

REUNITED IN GRATITUDE

Riki Siton sent me a message about a special gathering held in Ra'anana a couple of weeks ago: a thanksgiving celebration for the passengers of the Flydubai flight who experienced an extraordinary miracle.

The event was organized by Bar Kuperstein, who returned from captivity in Gaza, together with his amazing mother, Julie, and Efrat Raz, the widow of Noam Raz, a fighter in Israel's elite Yamam counterterrorism unit.

And where did this moving gathering take place? At the home of Ganya and Shay Tzohar, the aunt and uncle of fallen IDF officer Omer Neutra, who was taken hostage to Gaza.

Passengers came from all over Israel to give thanks, reconnect, and recite Birkat HaGomel, the blessing of thanksgiving after surviving danger.

Riki described an uplifting evening filled with unity, faith, and a deep sense of belonging. It was also a reminder of something we should never forget: We depend on one another all the time, not just when we're together on a plane high in the sky.

OUR STORY ISN'T OVER

People are speaking in apocalyptic terms: The end of the country, destruction of democracy, the end of the Zionist enterprise. I've seen posts by political activists describing how they're gritting their teeth, how they can barely breathe or sleep.

Yes, the elections are important, and the issues at stake are critical. But hold on a moment — we are part of a much greater story. We have a connection to eternity. We have thousands of years of experience



falling and getting back up again. And above all, there is God. Don't try to take His place and run the world. Just do your best to make a difference in it.

This week, I was reminded of an encouraging statement that feels especially relevant. Ditza Or was once interviewed during the most difficult period of her life. She had no idea whether her son Avinatan, who was being held hostage in Gaza, was alive or dead, or what condition he was in. And yet she said: “Our story has a happy end. And if it's not happy, then it's not the end yet."

Take those words beyond Avinatan's personal story and apply them to all of us. And whatever you think of the election results, take a stop for a moment and breathe. It’s not yet the end of the story.

REMEMBERING RABBI DR. JONATHAN SACKS

“Despair is not a Jewish emotion. Our hope, we say, has never been destroyed. ... What happens is not chance but a chapter in the complex script of the covenant which leads, mysteriously but assuredly, to our redemption. Crisis in Jewish history has always led to renewal, not despair. So it must be now.”

These timeless words are from Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks, zt”l, whose sixth yahrzeit we marked last Shabbat. For more of his teachings and their relevance to current events, Google “Sivan Rahav-Meir To Be a Jew.”

MORE POWER TO US ALL!

This week in the U.S., and last week in Israel, we gained an extra hour of sleep when we turned our clocks back to standard time. But the haftarah of Parashat Lech Lecha reveals a secret that, if we take it to heart, can help us start every day with renewed energy—even without that extra hour of sleep.

In shuls throughout the Jewish world, we read these words of the Navi Yeshayahu: "He gives strength to the weary... Even youths shall faint and grow weary, and young men shall stumble and fall... But those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength... They shall run and not grow weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Yeshayahu reveals that it is Hashem who gives strength to the weary. In other words, our energy comes from a different source than we might think.

What a beautiful description: "Those who hope in the Lord." They hold on to hope, even when not everything they have hoped for has come to pass.

The Navi is telling us that those who are connected to God, who have faith and a sense of direction in life, are the ones who have energy and can continually renew their strength.

Every morning, as part of Birkot HaShachar, we recite a blessing based on these verses: "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who gives strength to the weary."

Wishing everyone a week filled with strength and renewed energy!

THE FIRST WINTER SHABBAT OF THE YEAR

The political situation may be unclear, but here's one headline that's certain: This will be the first Shabbat in the US (and last week in Israel) since switching back to standard time, and this is an important reminder.

This Friday is going to be an especially short one, with candle-lighting much

earlier than last week. Let's use every day this week to get a head start on our Shabbat preparations: shopping and cooking, guests and activities, cleaning the house, and finding divrei Torah to share at the Shabbat table.

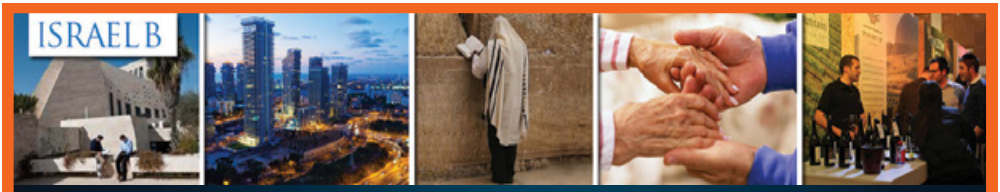
It's worth investing a little extra thought and planning so that we can welcome Shabbat more calmly, without the last-minute rush, just as we would want to welcome a queen into our home.

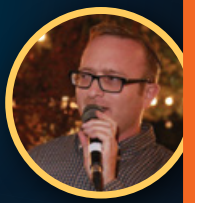
Shabbat Shalom!■

Sivan Rahav-Meir is a media personality and lecturer. Married to Yedidya, the mother of five. Lives in Jerusalem, and formerly served as the World Mizrachi Shlicha to North America. Sivan lectures in Israel and overseas about the media, Judaism, Zionism and new media. She was voted by Globes newspaper as most popular female media personality in Israel and by the Jerusalem Post as one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world.

OU Israel | Women's Division
Dorot Women's Choir
Weekly Choir Sessions
Under the direction of Hadassah Jacob
MONDAYS 7:00-9:00PM
Bringing the Words of Torah to Life!
NEW LOCATION
Diskin 1

To join, call Hadassah at 052-384-7230
OU ISRAEL | WWW.OUISRAEL.ORG



THE ISRAELB ONLINE COMMUNITY
Connecting you with fellow Jews, Israel & the Jewish People!

- Install the new **ISRAELB APP** from the google play store to your phones (Dedicated in memory of Elchanan Yosef ben Chaim Eliezer)
- Advertise on our new **ISRAELB BUSINESS CENTER** to gain exposure for your business
- We can help you **WRITE SPEECHES AND DIVREI TORAH** for family events & Smachot
- Use IsraelB to **ORGANIZE, PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE** your events and Smachot
- Use IsraelB to help you **SELL OR RENT OUT YOUR PROPERTY**

IsraelB is your resource for jobs, events, community news, shiurim and much more!
Subscribe to our IsraelB newsletter, follow us on Twitter (@IsraelBayit) and join our Facebook Page & Groups. (Links on IsraelB.org)
CONTACT BENJY SINGER:
benjysinger@israelb.org or
053-285-1526